

2705 Brookway Drive
College Station, Texas 77845
December 16, 2000

Ms. Jessica Jimmerson
College Station City Planner
Developmental Services
College Station, Texas

Dear Ms. Jimmerson,

I am writing you, because I still have serious concerns about the proposed method of developing Burt Hermann's tract 1 for Academy Sports. I attended the two meetings with Academy representatives at City Hall. I was a member of the East Bypass Small Area Citizen Planning Team, and I am now a member of the planning team working on the East Bypass Overlay District. I also live in the Windwood neighborhood.

This will be the first development proposed after the East Bypass Small Area Action Plan was approved. Neighborhood stores are one of the preferred land uses in that paln, but big box retail developments are not. The building size is to be 55,000 square feet, and about 1/3 of the building is in the floodplain. Locating the store in the floodplain directly conflicts with two actions in the plan that call for implementing the Greenways Master Plan and preserving the floodplains for water control.

In the current layout the building is at the back of the property and parking is in the front. If the building could be moved closer to the frontage road, it would not be in the floodplain or it would be there to a lesser degree. The number of parking spaces could be lowered to fit the normal non-holiday usage of the parking lot. This would give more space for the new location of the building. Academy is to be commended for offering to give the city the floodplain land on the south side of the development.

Another objective of the Bypass plan was to address urban design issues and insure visual quality. Aspects of visual quality include height, signage, building materials, color, and landscaping. In the presentation, the building was said to be 42 feet tall at the center front, but the actual roof height was to be from 27 to 22 feet tall. Limiting the height to 2 ½ stories (not 4 stories in front) would make this building similar to other buildings on the east side of the Bypass. If the building sign near the road is 35 ft. tall, drivers will be able to see the store's location without needing the extra building center height to get attention.

While the Academy representatives agreed to make some color changes to give more earth tones instead of white for the building, their construction material is to remain the same. A building more like the Barnes and Noble bookstore on Texas Avenue or the new Kroger store on Rock Prairie Road would be better quality and would set the stage for better developments all along the East Bypass. Landscaping was discussed at the meeting as a concern. The Academy representatives agreed to use more and larger trees and bushes in their landscape plan. I support the use of a greater number of larger or more mature plants. Size and maturity will make the landscaping much more effective more quickly.

Lighting is a concern to neighbors and to the planning team. Academy representatives agreed, I believe, to have their lighting recessed and limited to their site. The parking lot lights should be limited in height and should be recessed in the fixture, so that their impact outside of the lot is minimal. Any lights at the building should also be recessed and should not shine out away from the building. Lights need to go off before the staff leave in the evening just after 9 p.m. The representatives agreed to turn off the lights at closing, except for a few security lights. The number, location, and amount of lumens for the security lights that stay on should be discussed and specified. It is important to remember that the land to the east is proposed to be AO residential. It will be important that a light and sound buffer is provided between this business and new and existing homes.

Traffic flow was and is a concern for neighbors in the area. Of particular concern to Windwood is the proposed connection of Horse Haven Lane, Switch Station Drive, and Appomattox. The Planning and Zoning members agreed to putting in an emergency gate at the north end of Switch Station Drive. This would temporarily prevent most of the cut through traffic. There should also be internal sidewalks for people going from their cars to the building, as well as sidewalks that tie the site to other neighborhoods.

One goal in the area plan is to promote biking and walking, which means that sidewalks and bikeways need to be included in the design.

Academy has come to the meetings prepared to discuss issues with the adjacent neighborhoods. While there are still issues to be resolved, they have begun this process in a positive manner. I look forward to seeing improvements in the development of the site plan before the meeting with the Planning and Zoning Commission.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sherry Ellison".

Sherry Ellison